

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested.

I. Discussion of Claim Amendments

By way of the amendment instructions above, independent claim 1 has been revised so as to be less open-ended by virtue of the "consisting essentially of" preamble phraseology. Thus, the compositions covered by independent claim 1 and the claims dependent therefore are open to the inclusion of other unrecited components which do not affect the basic and novel characteristics of the claimed composition.

Claim 7 is new and recites that the polyacetal resin component (A) is the only resin present in the composition. Support for new claim 7 can be found in the originally filed specification by way of Examples 1-14 wherein it is evident that polyacetal resins (A1) and (A2) were each employed as the polyacetal resin component (A) which was the *only* resin present in the composition.

Claim 8 is also new and is based on prior claim 1, but requires that the composition *consists* of the polyacetal resin component (A), the glass inorganic filler (B), and optionally stabilizers, additives and/or fillers other than the glass inorganic filler (B). Support for such optional components is found in the original specification at page 12, line 7 through page 13, line 9.

Thus, upon entry of the present amendment, claims 1-8 will be pending herein for which favorable action on the merits is solicited.

II. Response to 35 USC §103(a) Rejection

Prior claims 1-6 attracted a rejection under 35 USC §103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" and hence unpatentable over Kashiwara (USP 5,183,860) in view of Anada (USP 5,777,019).

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Applicant notes that the present invention is novel in several respects. For example, the present invention is novel in that a polyacetal composition is provided which includes two distinct types of polyacetal resins, namely polyacetal resins (A1) and (A2), in combination with a glass inorganic filler component. The claimed composition is also especially characterized by the requirement that polyacetal resins (A1) and (A2) are present in a specified ratio with respect to one another. These features, which are precisely those defined in the pending claims herein, provide for compositions that have unexpectedly improved mechanical properties, such as tensile strength and tensile elongation. The Examiner is further invited to re-read the specification as originally filed, especially pages 8 and 9, as well as the data presented with respect to Examples 1-14 and Comparative Examples 1-11.

Turning attention to the applied references of record, applicant notes that Kashihara discloses a mixture of a low hydroxyl-containing polyacetal (LHC) and a high hydroxyl-containing polyacetal (HHC) and the incorporation of a thermoplastic polyurethane so as to improve the resulting composition's impact strength. The combination of LHC with HHC is shown by Kashihara to improve impact strength, weld strength and appearance which is damaged by peeling-off of the polyacetal from polyurethane.

Significantly, Kashihara, fails to disclose or suggest the incorporation of a glass filler to improve mechanical strength. It should especially be noted in this regard that examples of Kashihara show no improvement of mechanical strength such as tensile strength, compared with the comparative examples, even by the combination of LHC with HHC.

Thus, an ordinarily skilled person would not have expected to achieve improved mechanical strength properties from Kashihara by the combination of LHC and HHC alone, but instead would be directed to the necessity of incorporating a polyurethane therewith as a required indispensable component. Independent claims 1 and 8 thus

specifically exclude polyurethane from the compositions of the present invention. Specifically, polyurethane is excluded from claim 1 by virtue of the "consisting essentially of" language of claim 1 (which language excludes polyurethane as Kashihara per se discloses that its presence would materially affect the basic and novel characteristics of a LLC and HHC composition). Moreover, applicant notes that the presence of polyurethane in the compositions of the present invention, while resulting perhaps in a slight increase in impact strength, may exhibit a slight decrease in the tensile strength and elastic modulus properties. Moreover, the presence of polyurethane would be disadvantageous in view of strength and rigidity when added in such a large amount that would be required in order to actually see an improvement in elongation and impact resistance properties.

Anada fails to cure the deficiencies of Kashihara discussed above. In this regard, applicant notes that Anada discloses a polyacetal mixed with a glass filler to improve mechanical strength and then with a boric acid compound so as to further improve it better. True, Anada shows surface treatment of the glass filler with a silane compound. However, Anada does not direct an ordinarily skilled person to expect mechanical strength improvements when glass filler is compounded with LHC and HHC as is the case with the present invention. Thus, an ordinarily skilled person would not be motivated to combine the Kashihara and Anada references in the manner asserted by the Examiner.

Withdrawal of the rejection advanced under 35 USC §103(a) based on Kashihara

III. Conclusions

Every effort has been made to advance prosecution of this application to allowance. Therefore, in view of the amendments and remarks above, applicant suggests that all claims are in condition for allowance and Official Notice of the same is solicited.

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Should any small matters remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the Applicants' undersigned attorney so that the same may be resolved without the need for an additional written action and reply.

An early and favorable reply on the merits is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

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